

REMARKS

In view of the preceding amendments and the comments which follow, and pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.111, amendment and reconsideration of the Official Action of October 2, 2003 is respectfully requested by Applicants.

Summary

Claims 1 – 5 stand rejected. Claims 1 and 5 are amended. No new matter has been introduced as a result of these amendments.

Claims 1 – 5 are pending following entry of the present amendments.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 – 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (a) as being anticipated by Levin et al (US Patent 6,154,201). The pending claim 1 has been amended to recite “a joystick type knob, a rotary knob that is disposed coaxially with the joystick type knob.” Applicants have amended claim 1 to clarify the claimed invention and to remove any ambiguity that may have been the basis for the rejection. A feature of the current claim 1 is that the joystick type knob and the rotary knob are independent from each other. Whereas, Levin discloses a control knob on a device to allow a user the control functions of the device. In Levin, the knob is rotatable in a rotary degree of freedom and moveable in at least one transverse direction approximately perpendicular to the axis. In a further embodiment, Levin discloses a knob provided with force feedback in a rotary degree of freedom about an axis extending from through the knob (column 1, lines 55 – 67). Therefore, Levin discloses only one knob.

Further, in the present invention, claim 1 recites that a first actuator loads an external force on the joystick type knob, and a second actuator loads an external force on the rotary knob. As such, since the knobs are independent of each other, an external force loaded to the joystick type knob is not influenced by an operation state of the rotary knob, and similarly an external force loaded

to the rotary knob is not influenced by an operation state of the joystick type knob. Whereas, although Levin discloses that additional actuators can be provided for the other degrees of freedom of knob 18, the additional actuators are all influencing the same knob 18 (column 11 line 66 to column 12, line 9). Thus, in Levin a plural of external forces are loaded to the same knob, instead of a plurality of external forces loaded to a plurality of knobs, respectively. As such, since external forces can be loaded simultaneously on the same knob then an external force can be influenced by an operation state of the knob.

Additionally, in the claimed invention a first detector detects an operation state of the joystick type knob, and a second detector detects an operation state of the rotary knob. In contrast, in Levin detectors (sensors) operate to detect a plurality of operation states of the same knob when corresponding external forces are loaded.

Hence, for at least the above discussed distinguishable differences, the current claim 1 is not anticipated by Levin. Thus, claim 1 is allowable, and so are dependent claims 2 – 4.

Regarding claim 5, Applicants have amended claim 5 in a similar manner to claim 1 to render it distinguishable from Levin. Thus, claim 5 is also allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejections of claims 1 - 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that this application is now in condition for allowance, and favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and remarks is respectfully requested. Allowance of claims 1 – 5 at an early date is earnestly solicited. If, there are additional fees due, Applicants request that this paper constitutes any necessary petition and authorizes the Commissioner to charge any underpayment, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-1925.

If the examiner finds that there are any outstanding issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the below listed number

Respectfully submitted,
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